2011 UTHSC Softball Rules

All rules will be governed by ASA Rules unless noted below:

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Players must check in with their IDs before they play in their first game. Failure to do so will result in an ejection for the current game.
- All players on a team do not need to have the same uniform.
  - Numbers are also not required

TEAM COMPOSITION

- The roster limit per team is unlimited; however, no more than 15 shirts will be given out to the champions
- A team must have 8 players to start and continue a game
- A team may bat as many as 12 players without using substitutions. The team is still limited to 10 fielders on defense.
- Players may compete on one single sex team and one co-ed team.
- Once a player plays for a team, they are on that team for the remainder of the season.
- For a player to be playoff eligible, they must have played at least one game during the regular season.

EQUIPMENT

- **BATS**
  - Participants shall only use the bats provided by Campus Recreation. If a player is found to be using an illegal bat they shall be called out and ejected from the game.
- **SOFTBALLS**
  - Participants shall only use the balls provided by Campus Recreation. If a player is found to be using an illegal ball they shall be ejected from the game.
- **GLOVES**
  - Participants may use their own glove, or check one out from Campus Recreation at the fields.
- **SHOES**
  - Each player must wear shoes. Tennis/running shoes and rubber molded cleats are permitted. Spikes, screw-in cleats, cleats with metal or ceramic exposed, and apparel not intended for softball use (i.e. – gymnastic slippers, “vebram” toe shoes, flip-flops, ski and logger boots, dress shoes) will not be permitted.
- **HELMETS**
  - Helmets shall be provided by Campus Recreation, but their use is **NOT** mandatory.
• **HEADGEAR**
  - Hats and visors are allowed and must be worn forward. Any other headgear must be approved by the IM Coordinator ahead of time.

• **JEWELRY**
  - No jewelry is permitted unless approved ahead of time by the IM Coordinator.

• **BLOOD RULE:**
  - If an official observes that a player is bleeding, has an open wound, or an excessive amount of blood on his/her uniform the player will be directed to leave the game. The injured player is not to return until the bleeding has stopped, the wound is covered, and the bloody uniform is changed.

**THE GAME**

• **LENGTH OF GAME:** The game will consist of seven (7) innings or fifty-five (55) minutes of play, whichever occurs first. If an inning has started before the time limit has expired, then the inning will be completed. Teams need not play seven innings if:
  - The home team scores more runs in six and one half innings;
  - The home team scores more runs before the third out in the last half of the seventh inning; or the mercy rule can be applied

• In the event of in climate weather or unforeseen circumstances, the game score will be official after the completion of 4 innings. Games that have not completed 5 games will be resumed from the place that they left off.

• **COIN TOSS:** During the regular season a toss of a coin or odds/evens will determine which team shall have the first choice. The winning team of the toss shall have the following options:
  - Visiting Team – Bat First
  - Home Team – Play Defense First

• **TIMING REGULATIONS:** The clock will run continuously for the entire game.

• **EXTRA INNINGS:** Regular season games can end in a tie. Extra innings will only be played during the postseason.

• **MERCY RULE:** The game shall be over if a team is behind at the conclusion of an inning by:
  - Twenty (20) runs at the conclusion of the 3rd inning;
  - Fifteen (15) runs at the conclusion of the 4th inning;
  - Ten (10) runs at the conclusion of the 5th inning or later
• **PROTESTS:** If a team wants to submit a protest, the team captain must stop play immediately and notify the games umpires and supervisor. The supervisor will document the protest and forward it to the Intramural Graduate Assistants and/or Coordinator. Teams cannot protest an official’s judgment.

• **APPEAL PLAYS:** An appeal play is one in which an umpire cannot make a decision until requested by a member of the defensive team. Appeals must be made prior to the next legal or illegal pitch or before the defensive team has left the field.

• **Three types of appeal plays:**
  - leaving the base early
  - missing the base
  - batting out of order

**PLAYING RULES**

**PITCHING**

• All teams must pitch to their own team.
  - All teams must designate a pitcher.
• The offensive team can swap pitchers when their pitcher comes to bat.
  - The original pitcher must return to pitching once they have either scored or have been called out by an umpire.
• The offensive team’s pitcher cannot go into the field and play defensively at any other position then pitcher during the next half inning.
• If a batted ball hits the hitting team’s pitcher, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and all runners must return to their original bases.
• The defending team’s pitcher must be within the pitching circle.

**BATTING**

• The official score sheet must list the batting order of each team. The captain must fill out the batting order with the scorekeeper before the start of the game.
• Players must bat in the order that they are listed on the score sheet unless a substitute enters the game. The substitute must appear in the batting order in the place of the player that he or she is replacing.
• Once the first hitter in the batting order has batted twice, the number of batters in the lineup is locked for that team. Therefore, no new batting positions may be added unless an out was assessed for the vacant position when no player was present.
• The first player who bats in each inning shall be the player whose name follows the last player who has completed a turn at bat in the previous inning.
SLIDING

- Sliding feet first is **STRONGLY DISCOURAGED**, but allowed.
- Sliding head first is **NOT ALLOWED**; unless the player is sliding back into a base they left.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- Unlimited Substitutions are allowed with the following provisions:
  - Once Player B subs in for Player A, Player A can only return to the game by subbing for Player B.
  - The player being subbed out cannot return until the player subbing in has played one full inning. **EXCEPTION: Injuries**
    - Injury substitutions are at the discretion of the Officials and IM Coordinator.
  - In Co-Rec substitutions must be girl for girl/guy for guy

BALLS AND STRIKES

- There are no balls and no strikes.
- Each batter is given three pitches from their own pitcher to hit a ball in fair territory.

BATTER’S BOX

- The batter’s box is not lined. If, on a batted ball (fair or foul) a batter steps on home plate, the batter will be called out. If the batter stands too far outside of where a normal batter’s box would be, the official may ask the batter move.

INFIELD FLY RULE

- An "infield fly" occurs with all of the following conditions:
  - A fair fly ball (not including a line drive) which can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort.
  - There are 0 or 1 out in the inning.
  - There are runners on 1st and 2nd OR runners on 1st, 2nd, and 3rd.
- When all three conditions are met, the umpire will declare an "infield fly" and rule the batter out immediately, whether or not the fly ball is caught. Base runners must tag up if the fly ball is caught. Base runners may advance if the fly ball is dropped, but are not required to run and may not be forced out at the next base.
CO-ED MODIFICATIONS:

TEAM COMPOSITION:

- The roster limit per team is unlimited; however, no more than 16 shirts will be awarded to the league champions.
- A team consists of ten (10) players, 5 males and 5 females, all of which must bat and play defense.
- Extra Players Rule: Teams may elect to use up to 2 extra players (1 male and 1 female). In this instance, all players must bat and any ten (10) of these players, 5 males and 5 females, can play defense.
  - Note: a team may bat no more than 6 males or 6 females.
- A team must have eight (8) players to start and/or continue a game; at least 3 of both sexes must be present to start a game.
- Players can compete for only ONE co-rec team.
- Once a participant has played for a team, he/she may NOT transfer to another team.

DEFENSE

- No more than 5 players of each gender may play in the field at a time.
- The pitcher and catcher combination must include a male and female.
- Defensive players can play any position in the field.
- Outfield Line: Once the pitcher has received the ball and assumes a stance to pitch the ball to a batter, all outfielders must remain behind the outfield line until the ball is hit (no more than 4 players, excluding the pitcher and catcher, may play in the infield while a FEMALE PLAYER is at bat).

BATTING

- The batting order must alternate between male and female batters.
- If a team is playing with an uneven number of each gender, the team must take an out where the missing player would bat.
- The first player who bats in each inning shall be the player whose name follows the last player who has completed a turn at bat in the previous inning. When the 3rd out of an inning occurs before a batter has completed his or her turn at bat, that player will be the leadoff batter in the next inning with a new count.
- The batting order must alternate sexes throughout. If a team does not have enough of one sex, they will just take an automatic out in that spot in the order.
EJECTIONS:

- A player will be ejected from the game if he or she plays in a malicious manner. (To be determined by the official and or IM Coordinator)
- A substitute may replace the ejected player; if none are available, an automatic out will be assessed each time that position in the batting order is at bat.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- All players not currently playing defense, occupying the base coaching position, at bat, or on deck need to remain outside the fence.
- Player equipment bags, etc. must remain outside the fence to avoid interference with a thrown ball.
- Sun Flower Seeds and Tobacco Use will not be permitted.

SPORTSMANSHIP RATING

The Intramural Sports Program is committed to providing a safe, fair and enjoyable environment during IM contests. Unsportsmanlike behavior occasionally causes games to become unenjoyable, unfair and, in some cases, unsafe. In an effort to maintain the proper playing environment for IM games, the Sportsmanship Rating System has been established and will be in effect for regular season and playoff games in basketball. Awards will be given to the team with the highest rating.

GENERAL RATING SYSTEM CRITERIA:

"A" 4.0 EXCELLENT RATING: Players cooperate fully with the officials and supervisor. An open and calm rapport exists between the captain and the officials. The captain has full control of her/his teammates and fans.

"B" 3.0 GOOD RATING: Some players dissent verbally with the officials decisions but, in general, the captain and players cooperated well with the officials and supervisor. The captain had good control of team.

"C" 2.0 AVERAGE RATING: Players more verbal in disagreeing with officials calls. The captain may have failed to control her/his team.

"D" 1.0 POOR RATING: Dissent is open among team members. Players arguing with officials and themselves. The captain fails to assist the officials in game control.

"E" 0.0 UNACCEPTABLE RATING: The team displays little or no sportsmanship. A team causing a game to be terminated due to unsporting behavior will receive an "E" rating. Managers of teams receiving an "E" rating must meet with the IM Coordinator. The outcome of the meeting will determine further league participation.

2. METHOD OF RATING:
The officials will rate each team in each contest on a sportsmanship basis. The supervisor can also assist in the rating. The rating will be noted on the score sheet. Officials are not to discuss ratings with the teams. Teams are not to question the officials about the ratings. Teams can check their ratings at the IM Office. (SAC 312)

3. PLAYOFFS
For a team to be eligible for the playoffs, they must have an average sportsmanship rating of 3.0 or higher. Teams failing to meet this mark must have their Captain meet with the IM Coordinator to determine their playoff eligibility.